

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A glazing system for attaching a façade having top and bottom horizontal edges and a pair of vertical side edges to a building, comprising:

a distance element engaged with a frame of a building; at least one supporting element attached to said distance element and configured to engage a said bottom edge of a portion of said façade so as to secure the vertical load of said façade when the façade is in place on the building, while allowing vertical movement of the façade during the mounting operation thereof, thereby maintaining said façade in an elevated position;

at least one retaining element attached to said distance element, said at least one retaining element being substantially U-shaped and including a coupling organ engagement portion, a waist portion, and a flange portion, wherein said coupling organ engagement portion contacts a surface of said façade proximate to said coupling organ, said flange portion contacts a surface of said façade remote from said coupling organ, and said waist connects said coupling organ engagement portion to said flange portion and is configured to traverse and grip said façade at one of said side edges thereof and including a groove configured to grip a side edge of a portion of said façade, thereby preventing movement of said façade in a direction toward or away from a building, said at least one retaining element attached to said distance element by means of an organ member attached to said at least one retaining element in a manner permitting vertical movement of the element during mounting of said façade, and a coupling organ attached to said organ member and said distance element, and said coupling organ pivotally attached to said organ member about a pivot axis, whereby said façade may be attached to said at least one

retaining element before mounting on said distance element for handling said façade from the inside of a building, and said façade may be flexibly retained by said retaining element so as to prevent and preventing damage thereto.

10. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 9, including a connection unit attached to said distance element, said at least one supporting element, and said at least one retaining element.

11. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 10, further comprising arms, said arms having a first end and a second end, wherein said first end is attached to said connection unit and said second end is attached to said coupling organ, and wherein said connection unit is attached to said distance element, two or more of said at least one supporting elements, and two or more of said at least one retaining elements.

12. (currently amended) The glazing system of claim 9, wherein ~~said at least one retaining element is substantially U-shaped and has a coupling organ engagement portion, a waist portion, and a flange portion, wherein said coupling organ engagement portion contacts a surface of said façade proximate to said coupling organ, said flange portion contacts a surface of said façade remote from said coupling organ, and said waist connects said coupling organ engagement portion with said flange portion and is configured to traverse said façade at a side edge thereof, wherein said coupling organ engagement portion and said flange portion of said of said at least one retaining element each taper away from an opposing surface of said façade at a side edge thereof, thereby defining a void between said façade and said coupling organ engagement and flange portions of said at least one retaining element, and wherein said at least one retaining element is composed of a hard material.~~

13. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 12, wherein said flange portion of said at least one retaining element is biased in a direction toward said façade when said at least one retaining element is attached thereto.

14. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 10, wherein said coupling organ is operatively engaged with said connection unit, and moveable with respect thereto, whereby the position of said coupling organ can be adapted to correspond to a position of said at least one retaining element during installation of said façade.

15. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 10, wherein said connection unit is cylindrical in shape and has a first end, a second end, and a side portion, wherein said first end is attached to said distance element, said second end is attached to said at least one supporting element, and said side portion is attached to said at least one retaining element.

16. (previously presented) The glazing system of claim 10, further comprising said façade, comprising a panel having an outer sheet, an inner sheet, a framework connecting said outer sheet to said inner sheet and spanning a distance therebetween, and an elastic insert positioned at a bottom edge of said panel, and wherein said panel is retained in position by said at least one retaining element, and the weight thereof is supported by said at least one supporting element.

17. (new) The glazing system of claim 9, wherein each of said at least one supporting element, said at least one retaining element, and said coupling organ are disposed solely on the interior of said façade for access only from said building.

18. (new) The glazing system of claim 9, including an elastic compound contained within said at least one retaining element for increasing the flexible retention of said façade by said at least one retaining element.